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FM AMEMBASSY ABU DHABI
TO SECSTATE WASHDC 4953
INFO SECDEF WASHDC
USCINCENT MACDILL AFB FL
CJTfME
AMEMBASSY BAGHDAD
AMEMBASSY DOHA
AMEMBASSY KUWAIT
AMEMBASSY LONDON
AMEMBASSY MANAMA
AMEMBASSY MUSCAT
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E.O. 12356: DECL: OADR
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SUBJECT: LIFE IN TEHRAN

11. CONFIDENTIAL - ENTIRE TEXT.

12. TEHRAN REMAINS ECONOMICALLY DEPRESSED AND DEPRESSING ACCORDING TO UAE MINISTER OF HEALTH HAMAD AL-MIDFA. DURING AMBASSADOR'S FAREWELL CALL OCTOBER 3 (DCM ACCOMPANYING), MIDFA COMMENTED ON HIS RECENT VISIT TO TEHRAN AS PART OF A REGIONAL CONFERENCE ON PUBLIC HEALTH. HE SAID HE FOUND THE CITY IN A POOR STATE OF MAINTENANCE. HE STAYED AT THE FORMER HILTON; THE SHEETS WERE YEARS OLD, NO HOT WATER WAS AVAILABLE FOR TEA AND THE PLUMBING WORKED BADLY. HE SPENT MUCH OF HIS TIME DRIVING AROUND THE CITY. HE FOUND PEOPLE PERSONALLY FRIENDLY BUT COMPLAINING ABOUT THE LACK OF ECONOMIC PROGRESS. A FEW INDICATED REGRET FOR PASSING OF THE SHAH'S REGIME. LINES OF WOMEN IN BLACK CHADORS WERE WAITING OUTSIDE VARIOUS SHOPS. THERE WAS NO EVIDENCE OF NEW CONSTRUCTION OR REPAIR.

13. THE MEETING ITSELF, SAID AL-MIDFA, WAS TOTALLY DISORGANIZED AND CHAOTIC. IN WHAT MAY BE A TEA-LEAVES GAUGE OF POLITICAL RELATIONS, THE UAE WAS ASSIGNED FORTH PLACE IN PROTOCOL ORDER AFTER KUWAIT, OMAN AND QATAR. NO OTHER GCC STATES ATTENDED THE MEETING. AL-MIDFA NOTED THAT BAHRAIN HAD PLANNED TO ATTEND BUT HAD BEEN DISSUADED BY SAUDI ARABIA.

MACK